

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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R 200627Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0285

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 8609

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT ET

SUBJ: BITS & PICES ON ERITREA

REF: ASMARA 0540

1. IN RESPONSE TO REFTTEL, EMBASSY HAS IT FROM SEVERAL SOURCES THAT TIGRE CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR KALE-CRISTOS ABIY HAS NOT DEFECTED. ETHIOPIAN PRESS NOTES THAT HE SPOKE TO CROWD IN MAKALLE ON ZEMETCHA DAY, 17 JULY. POSSIBLY CONGEN'S SOURCE WAS CONFUSING THE DEFECTION OF KALE-CRISTOS WITH THAT OF COL. SOLOMON BELETE, FORMERLY COMMANDER OF THE PEASANT MARCH, WHO FLED THE COUNTRY UPON THE DISINTEGRATION OF THAT ILL-FATED UNDERTAKING.

2. EMBASSY FSL RECENTLY SPENT THREE WEEKS IN ASMARA VISITING FAMILY. LOCAL HAD LITTLE TO ADD TO CONGEN'S REPORTING EXCEPT TO VENTURE OPINION THAT "100 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION" SUPPORTS THE INSURGENTS IN THEIR FMAND FOR INDEPENDENCE. ALTHOUGH OUR SOURCE PREVIOUSLY APPEARED TO BE "MODERATE" ON ERITREAN QUESTION, AFTER THREE WEEKS IN ASMARA SHE BELIEVES THAT THE POPULACE WOULD NOT ACCEPT RETURN TO FEDERATION, AND THAT FIGHTING WILL CONTINUE UNTIL INDEPENDENCE IS ACHIEVED.
TIENKEN

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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